



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

TON OF POT SEIZED, 4 ARRESTED AT ALABAMA IMPORTS STORE

RUSSELLVILLE, Ala.— U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents arrested four aliens Monday and seized 2,048 pounds of marijuana hidden inside 67 large ceramic planters in a tractor-trailer that originated from Mexico.

The drugs have an estimated street value of \$2.5 million.

The truck first entered the United States Nov. 4 through the Laredo, Texas Port of Entry. Inspection by Customs and Border Protection officers determined the planters held drugs.

The driver was allowed to continue to the final destination, a Mexican imports store in Russellville, Ala., while being monitored.

Four men working at the store were directed to unload the truck and were doing so when ICE agents, police and sheriff's deputies arrested them. Investigation revealed that the four --all citizens of Mexico-- were not aware of what they were unloading, and that they are in the country illegally. ICE agents arrested them on immigration violations. They are being held at the Etowah County Jail.

Investigation revealed the driver of the truck had no knowledge the drugs were hidden in the shipment.

“Our ICE agents worked closely with Franklin County Sheriff and Russellville Police Department,” said Clifton Lollar, resident agent-in-charge of ICE's Birmingham investigations office. “They provided significant assistance to make this a successful operation. I understand that this is the largest marijuana seizure in the history of Franklin County.”

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.